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quoted. They seem to me important. "September 19th [1779]," speaking apparently of the towns burned before the army arrived at "Kannda-segea," he says: "At several towns that our army has destroy'd we found dogs hung up on poles about 12 or 15 feet high which we are told is done by way of sacrifice. When they are unfortunate in war they sacrifice two dogs in the manner above mentioned to appease their Imaginary god. One of these dog skins they suppose is converted into a Jacket the other into a tobacco pouch for their god. The woman who came to us at Chenessee says the Savages hung up dogs immediately after the Battle of Newls Town." See page 76 of Dearborn's journal, as printed in "Journals of the Military Expedition of Major-General John Sullivan against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779, with Records of Centennial Celebrations, etc. Prepared . . . by Frederick Cook, Auburn, 1887." — *William John Potts, Camden, N. J.*

GRADUAL RELAXATION OF INDIAN CUSTOMS. — In a letter from the Nez Percé Reservation, Idaho, Miss Alice C. Fletcher observes: "The transition condition of the Indian presents an interesting study. One can watch the old customs slowly relax their hold among the people, and finally give way, yet not without effecting a modifying influence upon their successors. Some of these rites and customs yield more easily than others, so that one can in a measure gauge their depth of root in the social soil; but whether this would indicate a greater or less antiquity for the custom, I am not prepared to say."

A WABANAKI COUNTING-OUT RHYME. — In a paper on "Some Indoor and Outdoor Games of the Wabanaki Indians," printed in the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada," Section II., 1888, Mrs. W. W. Brown, of Calais, Maine, describes the game of *N'a-ta-sol-te-ben*, played by the older squaws as well as children. "After counting out one to act as *squaw-oc-t'moos*, they form into line by each taking the one in front by the dress between the shoulders. Sometimes ten or twelve will be in this line. The first one plays mother, protecting the numerous family behind her from *squaw-oc-t'moos*. The latter keeps crying *Bo-wod-man Wa-scs-uk* ('I want babies'), and runs first one way, then the other, trying to catch hold of one in the line. To prevent this, the mother tries to keep her always in front, causing those furthest from her to move very swiftly, like a spoke in the wheel, the end near the rim making a larger circle than at the end of the hub in the same time. As the excitement increases, they lose equilibrium and go tumbling over the ground, scrambling to get out of the way of *squaw-oc-t'moos*, as the one caught has to take her place. A person who has never seen this game can little imagine the amount of noise of which female lungs are capable. The counting out is not very different from that of white children. They all place two fingers of each hand in a circle; the one who repeats the doggerel, having one hand free, touches each finger in the circle, saying, *Hony, kee-bee, la-weis, ag-les, hun-tip*. Each finger that the *hun-tip* falls on is doubled under, and this is repeated again and again until there are but three fingers left. The owners of these start to run,

and the one caught has to play as *squaw-oc-ē'moos*. To the Indian mind 'counting out' has a significance, and even the simple *hun-tip* is a magic word, bringing good luck, as it lessens the chance of being *squaw-oc-ē'moos*."

The game thus described is identical, in respect of arrangement and action, with a very common game of white children (also played by grown people), usually known as "Fox and Chickens" ("Games and Songs of American Children, No. 102, 'Hawk and Chickens'"). In one of the most familiar forms of the game the pursuer represents a witch, and the dialogue, which begins with a verse, "Chickamy, chickamy, crany, crow," proceeds: "What are you doing, old witch?" "I am making a fire to cook a chicken." "Where are you going to get it?" "Out of your coop." The chase continues until the last of the line behind the mother is caught, the latter protecting her brood from the witch, as in the Indian game.

It would seem likely that the Wabanaki game is borrowed; but what is curious is that the witch is a personage of the Indian mythology, "*squaw-oc-ē'moos*," or "the swamp-woman," being a personage greatly dreaded. The fungus growing from the bark of trees is known as the "swamp-woman's dishes," and children will not play at toadstools for fear of the swamp-woman.

As to the counting-out rhyme, no such usage has thus far been remarked among native American tribes when not affected by white influence. In this case the mode of counting so closely resembles a method much in use among the whites — namely, telling off words of a rhyme on fingers placed in a circle, as, for example, on the rim of a hat, or simply on the knees of the players — that there seems to be a strong probability of borrowing. The words are five in number, and the last, *hun-tip*, bears some resemblance to the *bumfit* or *bumfrey* which is the most salient feature of the so-called Anglo-Cymric score, a mode of counting proceeding by fives, and now known to have been derived from the modern Welsh, and imported into this country by the early colonists, from whom it was borrowed by Indians, and being found in use among Maine tribes was presumed to be of genuine Indian derivation. At the same time, the variation of this simple Wabanaki formula from the type (supposing it to be descended from this root) shows how changed and unrecognizable such rhymes may become.

As an example of the Anglo-Cymric score, used by Indians in Natick, Mass., the following may be quoted from the book on games above mentioned:—

1 ane	6 sother	11 een dick	16 een bumfrey
2 tane	7 lother	12 teen dick	17 teen bumfrey
3 tother	8 co	13 tother dick	18 tother bumfrey
4 feather	9 deffrey	14 feather dick	19 feather bumfrey
5 fip	10 dick	15 bumfrey	20 gig it

It must be admitted that the resemblance is so slight as to leave the derivation of the Wabanaki rhyme an open question. If it comes from the formulas in use among the English, it has undergone great change and reduction. But what is interesting is, to observe the manner in which a

usage, simply of a social character, being transferred to a simple-minded people, is interwoven with its own mythology, and assumes a mysterious and superstitious character.

Mrs. Brown, having been consulted respecting the game, writes : " The counting-out rhyme begins the game, and those five words of no meaning — or none *as understood by the Indians of to-day* — are the only ones used, and I do not agree with you in thinking the game borrowed, — it is too purely Indian in character. Besides, their ideas of *squaw-oc-i'moos* would naturally suggest such a game to their minds. Again, they never play the game in the woods, or near thick bushes, their dread of the swamp-woman is so great."

It may be remarked that in any case the spirit of Wabanaki represents the original significance of the sport, which undoubtedly in a remote time was connected with mythology among our own ancestors, and represented the actions of a dangerous being who was an object of real terror, just as it now does to the Algonquin tribe of Maine. Indeed, most of our games of chase symbolize the pursuit either of a witch or a wild animal, while sometimes, as in the game now under consideration, varying forms represent now the first and now the last of these enemies.

The only way of determining whether these usages are originally Indian would be comparison with the customs of other tribes ; as long as they are isolated, and correspond in outward form to white customs, it appears natural to assume their derivation from the latter. I am informed that no use of counting-out rhymes has been observed among the Eskimo.

W. W. N.

REVUE DE L'HISTOIRE DES RELIGIONS. — I have recently received a letter from M. Jean Reville, editor of the " *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*," in which he expresses his hope and desire of increasing the influence of the *Revue* through obtaining subscribers as well as contributors from America. Arrangements can be made for the translation into French of articles sent to the editor. The *Revue*, which appears at intervals of two months, is the only journal at present in existence exclusively devoted to the scientific study of religions. During the ten years of its existence it has acquired for itself an enviable reputation for the excellence of its matter, as well as for its absolute impartiality ; all articles of a polemic character, as well as such as treat their subject from a purely theological point of view, being rigidly excluded. In view of the important bearings of the comparative study of religions and religious rites on the study of folk-lore, it is the interest of the American Folk-Lore Society to promote the circulation of the *Revue* in this country. The *Revue* is now beginning its tenth year. It appears every second month, the publishing house being that of E. Leroux, 28 Rue Bonaparte, Paris. The subscription for America is thirty francs. I shall be glad to receive names of subscribers, or articles intended for publication, and will forward the same to M. Reville. — *Morris Fastrow, Fr., University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.*